



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION
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MINUTES

RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION March 14, 2007

I. MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Robert E. Cusack
Mr. Robert Goff
Mr. John Grosvenor, AIA
Ms. Patrice O'Malley Hagan
Dr. Ronald Onorato
Mr. Jean Rondeau
Mr. Frederick C. Williamson, Chairman & SHPO

STAFF PRESENT

Mr. Jeffrey Emidy, National Register Assistant
Ms. Pamela Kennedy, Deputy Director
Mr. Edward F. Sanderson, Executive Director
Mr. Wm. McKenzie Woodward, Architectural Historian
Ms. Sarah Zurier, Special Projects Coordinator

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Joseph Dias, representing Dr. Michael Sullivan, Director DEM
Dr. James Garman, NR Review Board
Mr. Saul Kaplan, Executive Director, EDC
Mr. Michael Hebert, NR Review Board
Mr. Karst Hoogeboom
Mr. George Johnson, Statewide Planning
John P. Leyden, State Building Commissioner
Dr. Patrick Malone
Dr. E. Pierre Morenon
Dr. Patricia Rubertone

GUESTS

Mr. Michael Hogan, House Policy Office
Ms. Joanna Doherty, NR Consultant, Borden Farm
Mr. John Borden, Borden Farm
Ms. Caroline Borden, Borden Farm
Mr. Richard Youngkin & Ms. Joan Youngkin, NR Consultants, Hale House
Dr. Patrick Conley & Ms. Gail Conley, Providence Gas Company Purifier House
Jason Werda

II. AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 A.M., Mr. Williamson, presiding.

2. Minutes of January 10, 2007, meeting

On a motion by Mr. Rondeau, seconded by Dr. Onorato, the Commission

VOTED unanimously to approve the Minutes of January 10, 2007.

3. Executive Director's Report

a) Mr. Sanderson introduced Michael Hogan from the Rhode Island House of Representatives Policy Office. With the separation-of-powers removal of legislators from Boards and Commissions, the House has assigned policy staff to provide liaison. Mr. Hogan explained that his assignment is to observe and provide assistance as needed but that he will not participate in the Commission's deliberations.

b) The Governor's Budget recommendations for the Commission's State Fiscal Year 2008 Appropriation level funds current operations. The Governor has rescinded his statewide order for state offices to shut down several days during the year in order to reduce the State payroll. However, the Department of Administration has directed agencies and departments to submit proposals for additional savings that could result in "shut-down days" at the RIHPHC.

c) Mr. Sanderson reported on briefings he provided to Rhode Island Members of Congress and their staffs on the federal FY 2008 budget that calls for level funding for historic preservation. Pending legislation includes technical improvements to the federal historic rehabilitation tax credit.

d) The scheduled consideration of 2007 Certified Local Government Grants at the March Commission meeting was postponed because a winter storm forced cancellation of the March meeting. Information about the proposed grants and a RIHPHC staff recommendation was distributed to Commissioners by e-mail, and Commissioners Hoozeboom, Cusack, Onorato, Malone, Goff, Rondeau, Hagen, and Johnson recorded their approval for the recommended grants. On a motion by Dr. Onorato, seconded by Mr. Grosvenor, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve 2007 Certified Local Government Grants for the following projects:

\$10,000 for the 2008 Statewide Historic Preservation Conference. This is an annual recommendation. These funds are an essential component in the conference budget.

\$19,500 to complete a large National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Blackstone

Boulevard-Cole Avenue Historic District on the East Side of Providence. The Commission provided a CLG grant to begin this project last year with the intention of providing additional funding to complete the project this year. This is an important 20th-century historic district that fits together with previous National Register nominations on the East Side. This work will complete on-going work and fill a current gap in National Register coverage.

\$7,000 to study the use and potential for re-use of 14 buildings owned by the Town of Bristol and located in the Bristol Waterfront Historic District. A key function of the Certified Government Program is to assist Town governments with historic preservation issues.

\$2,750 for historic survey and computer database work on Block Island. This project will add new information to the RIHPHC survey published in 1991 (including information about new construction), and the database will be used to encourage preservation of historic buildings.

\$1,500 to assist planning for the preservation of the historic Allen-Madison House located on state-owned land at Quonset Point. This vacant historic building needs a future and a plan for how to get there.

\$2,500 for restoration plans at Pawtucket's Oak Grove Cemetery. Using a previous CLG grant, the City developed plans to restore the bandstand at Slater Park and subsequently funded the restoration work with City funds. They plan to follow the same process at Oak Grove Cemetery. The property is of local historical interest and may be eligible for National Register listing.

\$4,750 partial funding toward preservation of Grace Church Cemetery. The City of Providence and several non-profit partners are beginning a large project to plan, design, and implement restoration of an historic cemetery that serves as a gateway to the Elmwood neighborhood. The CLG funds could be targeted to needed historical research.

4. National Register Review Board

Final Nominations

Borden Farm, Portsmouth

Ms. Kennedy presented information about the farm complex that includes a handsome mid-19th-century house, late 19th-century English barn, corn crib, farm workers' house, and a rural setting. The Borden family settled in Portsmouth in the late 17th century, and the Borden Farm today is a well-preserved example of a prosperous general farm. The Town of Portsmouth transmitted a Town Council Resolution in support of the nomination of Borden Farm. Dr. Onorato commented that the historical overview section of the nomination should reference the importance of Anne Hutchinson during Portsmouth's settlement period. Following further discussion, on a motion by Mr. Grosvenor, seconded by Dr. Onorato, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve the nomination.

Providence Gas Company Purifier House, Providence

Ms. Kennedy presented information about the property, an unusual turn-of-the-century industrial building constructed by the Providence Gas Company to purify its manufactured gas. The Purifier House is a long, narrow, four-story building, designed and built by the Berlin Iron Bridge Company (Berlin, Connecticut). In 1925, the building was modified for general warehouse and commercial uses associated with the waterfront. The Providence Gas Company Purifier House (1900) exemplifies the evolution of industrial building technology in the late 19th and early 20th centuries--an early example of both steel-frame and reinforced concrete industrial buildings, and its later history reflects the development of the Providence waterfront. Following further discussion, on a motion by Dr. Onorato, seconded by Mr. Goff, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve the nomination.

Edward Everett Hale House, South Kingstown

Ms. Kennedy presented information about the property, a 19th-century summer house used by the noted author Edward Everett Hale. The building is a well-preserved example of Narragansett seaside summer homes. Hale, a prominent Boston Congregational minister, author, and advocate for social reform movements and literary and artistic interests, was an active member of Matunuck's seasonal community that cultivated an intellectual character. The creation and use of the house is documented in family records. The property is owned by the Pettaquamscutt Historical Society and will be open to the public as a museum. Following further discussion, on a motion by Ms. Hagen, seconded by Mr. Goff, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve the nomination. Dr. Onorato is a member of the Board of Directors of the Pettaquamscutt Historical Society, and he did not participate in the discussion or vote on the nomination.

Preliminary Presentations

Broadway-Armory Historic District Amendment, Providence

Mr. Emidy presented information about the amendment to add five 19th-century houses and a small mid-19th-century commercial building that are located adjacent to the current boundary of the historic district. The houses are consistent with the historical character of buildings included in the historic district. Following further discussion, on a motion by Dr. Onorato, seconded by Mr. Grosvenor, the Commission unanimously

VOTED preliminary approval for nomination of the property.

Westerly Downtown Historic District Amendment, Westerly

Mr. Emidy presented information about the amendment to add one building that was excluded from the original nomination. Constructed in 1935 as the Nardone Motors showroom and garage, the simple, two-story brick building is a modest 20th-century commercial structure that contributes to the history and character of the surrounding downtown historic district. At the time of original nomination, the building was less than fifty years old, and its history was not researched. The current property owner plans to rehabilitate the Nardone Motors Building on the basis of historical photographs. Following further discussion, on a motion by Dr. Onorato, seconded by Mr. Grosvenor, the Commission unanimously

VOTED preliminary approval for nomination of the property.

5. Approval of 2007 State Preservation Awards

Mr. Woodward presented and described nominations for 2007 Statewide Historic Preservation Awards. Following discussion, on a motion by Ms. Hagen, seconded by Mr. Goff, the Commission unanimously

VOTED to approve the following 2007 STATEWIDE PRESERVATION AWARDS

PRESERVATION PROJECT AWARDS

17 Gordon Avenue, Providence
324 Broad Street, Central Falls
John Waterman Arnold House, Warwick
Touro Synagogue, Newport
Lonsdale Village, Lincoln
Pawtucket City Hall, Pawtucket
Masonic Temple, Providence

STEWARDSHIP

Barrington Town Hall

ADVOCACY

Stop Wasting Abandoned Property

ARTISANRY

Robert Mende

JOHN H. CHAFEE PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

Governors Lincoln Almond and Donald Carcieri and Providence Preservation Society
for the Masonic Temple

FREDERICK C. WILLIAMSON PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AWARD

Charlotte Eschenheimer Johnson

ANTOINETTE F. DOWNING VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD

Karen L. Jessup

6. Other business:

There was no other business.

7. Next meeting date: The next meeting of the Commission will be Wednesday, April 11, 2007.

9. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 11:15 A.M.

Minutes recorded by,

Edward F. Sanderson, Executive Director
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer